

Filed for intro on 06/06/2000

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 816
By McCord

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Johnsie Katherine Hays,
of Alcoa, for her courage and determination.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly should honor those individuals whose strength serves as an inspiration to us all; and

WHEREAS, Johnsie Katherine Hays, the awe-inspiring 12-year-old daughter of Steve and Julie Hays, and the oldest sister of Challye and Stephens Hays, all of Alcoa, is one such outstanding individual who has successfully battled Rasmussen's Encephalitis; and

WHEREAS, after her first seizure at the tender age of three, Johnsie Hays endured grueling brain surgeries, beginning with her first as a young four-year-old, during which she had various pieces of monitoring equipment attached to her small body; and

WHEREAS, Johnsie was very uncomfortable and swollen during her treatments in the hospital, but always maintained a positive spirit; when nurses came to Johnsie's room to spend time with her, she would insist on playing her favorite game of "Go Fish"; and

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WHEREAS, while consulting with physicians on whether to pursue a second radical surgery, requiring that her head be shaved, in her typically bubbly response to the doctors, Johnsie replied, "Then, let's get on with it!"; and

WHEREAS, four hours into her second surgery, a rainbow, thereafter referred to as "Johnsie's Rainbow," appeared after a rain shower, symbolizing the hope of brighter days ahead for Johnsie; and

WHEREAS, Johnsie's deep faith in God gives her the strength in the knowledge that her rainbow was His sign of her impending recovery; and

WHEREAS, despite all Johnsie has endured during her short lifetime, she remains cheerful and optimistic; she has faced her surgeries with extreme courage and puts her trust in God, her family, and the medical staff around her; and

WHEREAS, she has readily resumed her pre-operational lifestyle, as much as she has been able. A sixth-grader at Alcoa Middle School, Johnsie works twice as hard as the other students, and is successfully maintaining an "A" average in nearly all of her subjects; she has improved her reading level by a whole grade level, just during the past year; and

WHEREAS, as a twelve-year-old, Johnsie enjoys her friends, music, clothes, going to dances, and is very active in her church; and

WHEREAS, every summer, she continues to spend a week at Wesley Woods, a local environment camp where, with adult assistance, she enjoys hiking, canoeing, and swimming; and

WHEREAS, Johnsie loves to laugh at herself when she makes a mistake. This optimism has been her mainstay through all that she has endured; and

WHEREAS, Johnsie Hays is a strong advocate for children with disabilities; she attended Tennessee's Disability Day at the State Capitol in March, 2000, and eloquently talked to many State Senators and Representatives about her situation, and about how learning in a regular classroom environment has helped her achieve her goals; and

WHEREAS, a strong individual with great courage and determination, Johnsie's future goals are to attend college to become a teacher; and

WHEREAS, she is a tremendous source of pride for her family, her friends, and her community, and it is important that she be appropriately honored by this legislative body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor Miss Johnsie Katherine Hays, of Alcoa, for her remarkable determination, courage, and spirit in the face of a life-threatening adversity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.